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Link for vacancies throughout the Diocese <https://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/about-us/other/jobs>

The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sunday 29th December 2024

Happy New Year to everyone from Fr Thomas and many thanks for Christmas Gift donations

Page 105 Book of Sirach from Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6, 12-14 Colossians 3: 12-21 Gospel Luke 2: 41-52

This weekend, the first Sunday of Christmas, the Church celebrates the Holy Family at Nazareth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The purpose of the far-sighted Pope Leo XIII in instituting this feast is to present the Holy Family as a model and example for all Christian families. We live in a time when the family institution is under severe threat. As an institution that is the nucleus of every human society, the family has suffered dramatically in our time. Consequently, society at large is suffering too.

The first reading is from the Book of Sirach which offers advice on living a virtuous life, focusing on ethics, wisdom and morality. This makes it a valuable guide for both individuals and communities and is well worth reading. The first reading this weekend highlights the importance of family bonds and respect and the duties of each member in order to maintain the sanctity of the family.. Sirach calls us to honour and care for our parents, especially in their vulnerability. In a culture that often prizes independence, this wisdom reminds us of the beauty of interdependence. Strong families embrace the sacred duty to care for one another and, in doing so, reflect God's love for the world. We must examine our own families in this regard.

The second reading from St Paul's Letter to the Colossians, he states that nothing but a return to the virtues that the Gospels demand of us can bring sanctity back to the world. He calls for compassion, kindness, humility and patience, virtues that help maintain harmony and love within the family. He urges families to forgive one another which heals relationships and brings peace to the household. Love holds families together in unity. Let us start with our own family circle to bring sanctity back to our world. Let us have the true peace of Christ in our hearts and in our home, each one carrying out the task God has given them.

The Gospel from Luke takes us into the heart of the Holy Family's own trials. When the 12 year old Jesus stays behind in the Temple during the Passover feast, Mary and Joseph face deep anxiety. Their worry mirrors the fears and struggles of parents today. Yet they approach the situation with faith, and when they find Jesus among the elders, are amazed at His wisdom.

Mass times	Feast Days
6 pm Confessions 6.30pm Vigil Mass Jane Barber RIP 1st anniversary	Saturday 28th Holy Innocents Herod the Great was King of Judea at the time of the birth of Jesus. He heard that the 3 Wise Men, kings from the east, had followed a star as it indicated the birth of an important person. Herod was troubled and called the chief priests and learnt that they had finished in the area of Bethlehem. To protect his position and those of his ancestors he ordered that all children under two years old in the vicinity of Bethlehem be killed. Jesus, Mary and Joseph escaped the slaughter with their "Flight into Egypt"
9.30 am Mass	Sunday 29th December The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph Mass for Ammal Abraham RIP
NO MASS	Monday 30th St Egwin of Evesham Anglo-Saxon born in about 660, a descendant of the Mercian kings in central England. He devoted himself to God in his youth as a monk. Appointed Bishop of Worcester in 692. With his zeal, the severity of opposing evil and his reforms he incurred the hostility of some in his diocese. He went on a penitential pilgrimage to Rome to answer to the pope for complaints that had been made against him. Returned to England and was more forgiving. With the help of King Ethelred of Mercia he founded the famous Abbey of Evesham in the honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He then undertook another pilgrimage to Rome in the company of King Conrad of Mercia and King Offa of the East Saxons. He obtained considerable privileges for his foundation from Pope Constantine. Bishop Egwin died on 30 th December 717 and was buried in the monastery at Evesham. Eventually, Evesham Abbey became one of the great Benedictine houses of medieval England.
10 am Mass Shibu Thomas RIP New Year Eve Adoration at 10pm followed by Mass at midnight	Tuesday 31st St Pope Sylvester I Born in 285 in Italy, son of a Roman named Rufinus. In 314 he was appointed Bishop of Rome as Pope Sylvester I. In his first year he convened the Council of Arles which condemned the separatist Donatist sect. The year before Roman Emperor Constantine was starting to become interested in Christianity and played a role in the Edict of Milan which declared tolerance for Christianity in the Roman Empire. A few years later he was baptised and was the first Roman Emperor to convert to the Christian Church. With Pope Sylvester he elevated the status of Christianity in Rome. In 324 he gave his palace of the Lateran to the Church and it became the Cathedral Church of Rome for the Pope, the first Basilica in Rome which was named the Basilica of St John Lateran. In 325 Pope Sylvester convened the First Council of Nicaea which condemned the Arian heresy which claimed God the Son was a lower status than God the Father and the Holy Spirit. It defined the first Nicene Creed which stated that the three persons of the Trinity were equal. However this was only the beginning of a devastating struggle in the Church for centuries. Pope Sylvester built many churches including the old St Peters, the Basilica of the Holy Cross in Jerusalem and St Laurence Outside the Walls. He died on 31 st December 335 aged 50 and was initially buried in a church he had built at the cemetery of Priscilla on the Salarian Way. In 761 his relics were transferred by Pope Paul I to the Church of St Sylvester, now the national church of English Catholics in Rome.
6.30 pm Mass for New Year	Wednesday 1st January Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God We start the year with the recognition of the importance of the Virgin Mary, who gave birth to our Saviour. . She accepted her role in the birth of Christianity despite not fully understanding becoming an unmarried virgin mother.

NO MASS	Thursday 2nd St Basil the Great of Caesarea Born in 330 in Caesarea to wealthy and saintly Christian Greek family, one of 10 children. His paternal grandmother, mother, father, one sister and three brothers are all venerated as saints. Educated in Caesarea where he met his close friend Gregory of Nazianzus. He then studied advanced rhetoric and philosophy in Constantinople and Athens where he met again Gregory of Nazianzus. They both studied with a student who would become the pagan Roman Emperor Julian. Later they were in conflict with Julian. Basil, Gregory and Gregory's brother Gregory of Nyssa were known as the <i>Cappadocian Fathers</i> and opposed the heresy of Arianism and were strong supporters of the Nicene Creed. Basil wrote numerous theological works and libraries preserve many of his books and letters. He preached to large gathering twice a day and was loved by them. He took care of the poor and had a hospital built. Basil did superlative and enduring work in one of the most difficult times the Church had ever faced. A greatly respected Doctor of the Church.					
NO MASS	Friday 3rd The Most Holy Name of Jesus Jesus was the name given by the angel Gabriel to Mary at the Annunciation before Christ's birth. It was the name by which our Lord was known in his family and friends					
6 pm Confessions 6.30pm Vigil Mass Rosina Le Bas RIP	Saturday 4th St Elizabeth Ann Seton First American to be canonised. Born in 1774 into high society New York. Daughter of a distinguished physician and first health officer of New York. Dr Bayley attended to immigrants disembarking onto Staten Island. He had been a British Redcoat's surgeon during the War of Independence. He cared for New Yorkers when yellow fever swept through the city. Her mother was the daughter of an Episcopal rector so Elizabeth was brought up with that faith. Her mother died in 1777 in childbirth and her father eventually married again to a member of the Roosevelt family to look after his two surviving daughters. The new couple had five children. Eventually the stepmother rejected Elizabeth and Mary who went to live with their paternal uncle and his wife. Then the marriage broke up and the two girls went to live again with their father to look after their stepbrothers and stepsisters. Aged 19 Elizabeth married a wealthy businessman and they had a residence in fashionable Wall Street. The happy couple had five children. Her Episcopalian faith had developed her interest in the help of the underprivileged and education of the poor. When her husband was ill they travelled to Italy for his health but he died there. Elizabeth was attracted to the Catholic Church while in Italy. Converted to Catholicism when she returned to New York as did her sister-in-law Cecilia Seton much to the opposition of their Episcopal family. Elizabeth established the first Catholic girls' school in USA. Founded the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of St Joseph following the rules of St Vincent de Paul. She died on 4 th January 1821 aged 46. By 1830 the Order were running orphanages and schools and had established their first hospital in St Louis.					
9.30 am Mass	Sunday 5th January The Epiphany of the Lord					
PLEASE PRINT IN BLOCK CAPITALS WHEN RECORDING NAMES FOR MASS INTENTION						
Your prayers are needed for the following people						
Sue Chandler	Hazel Sale	Joe Heatley	Trevor Delves	Valerie Baker	Ruth Gleeson	Fr Antony Gatt

NOTICES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fr Thomas cannot celebrate Mass on Monday 30th and Thursday 2nd next week due to other commitments including seeing the bishop

Rosina Le Bas died last Monday 23rd December peacefully at 6.30 pm

Rosina was a devoted parishioner at St Vincent de Paul for a long time as a reader, Eucharistic Minister and regular participant in Wednesday socials. While staying with her granddaughter Daniella recovering from a chest infection she suffered a huge stroke on Sunday 22nd December. She was admitted to hospital and underwent an operation to remove the clot which failed. On Monday afternoon Fr Tom from St Boniface anointed her and she was aware of what was going on. After her son arrived to see her she died peacefully at 6.30 pm.

Fr Antony Gatt had successful heart surgery on Monday 23rd December and is recovering well.

Fr Antony wishes to thank everyone for all the support and prayers

Ruth Gleeson is 99 years old and very ill and needs our prayers

Ruth, wife of deceased Deacon Paddy Gleeson, mother of Dee Heatley and mother in law of Joe Heatley, is currently in a Nursing Home and will celebrate her 100th birthday on 17th January 2025



The new idea of hosting the Posada for a night was a great success in the parish

Those parishioners who took into their homes the figures of Mary, Joseph and the donkey, for the night helped them in many ways to prepare for Christmas and renewing the coming of Jesus into their hearts. The demand was so great we had two Posadas being hosted. Opposite is a picture of a Posada in the home of one of our parishioners.

Parish collection for last weekend 21st and 22nd December

							Christmas Gift to Fr Thomas		
Parish Gift Aid Envelopes	Gift Aid	Parish Loose Collection	Direct debits, standing orders	Gift Aid	Total of Offertory Collection	Use of Church	Gift Aid	Loose	TOTAL of all money
£117	£29.25	£152.66	£242.54	£51.98	£593.43	£60	----	£5	£658.43

Parish collection on 25th December for Christmas Day Gift for Fr Thomas

Parish Gift Aid Envelopes	Gift Aid	Parish Loose Collection			Total of Collection	Other money	Gift Aid	Loose	TOTAL of all money
£425	£106.25	£284.90			£816.15				£816.15